

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 LONDON 01352 252148Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15
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R 251305Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2411
INFO AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

S E C R E T LONDON 01352

E. O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PEPR SA YS
SUBJECT: SAUDI VIEWS ON SITUATION IN SOUTH YEMEN

REF: LONDON 1037

FCO DESK OFFICER FOR THE YEMENS SHOWED US A REPORT ON A CONVERSATION THE BRITISH CHARGE IN ADEN HAD ON JANUARY 8 WITH THE SAUDI AMBASSADOR TO ADEN. THE LATTER STATED THAT THE SAUDIS NOW CONSIDER IT ESSENTIAL TO RESUME ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO PDRY AND TRY TO "REBUILD BRIDGES." THE SAUDIS ARE VERY WORRIED ABOUT THE POSITION OF SALIM RUBAYI ALI. THE AMBASSADOR FELT THAT HE IS IN A VERY SHAKY POSITION AND HAS LOST MAJORITY SUPPORT IN THE POLITBURO AND CENTRAL COMMITTEE. ALSO, SOME OF HIS SUPPORTERS HAVE LOST THEIR JOBS; FOR EXAMPLE, ALI SALIM AL-BIDH LOST HIS MINISTERIAL PORTFOLIO, AS DID ALI SALIM LA'WER AND THE DIRECTOR OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE. THE ONLY SUPPORTERS IN POWER WHOM SALIM RUBAYI ALI HAS LEFT ARE JA'IM SALIH, HASSAN BA'UM, AND AL-BIDH. FOREIGN MINISTER MUHAMMAD SALIH MUTI' IS SITTING ON THE FENCE.

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INDUSTRY MINISTER ABDUL AZIZ ABDUL WALI IS A FIRM SUPPORTER OF ISMAIL, AS ARE DEFENSE MINISTER ALI ANTAR AND INTERIOR MINISTER SALIH MUSLIH. SAUDI AMBASSADOR SAID THAT SALIM RUBAYI ALI HAD ANTAGONIZED PRIME MINISTER ALI NASSER MUHAMMAD, AND THAT A CONTRIBUTORY REASON FOR SALIM RUBAYI ALI'S PRESENT PLIGHT WAS THAT HE ADOPTED A FAVORABLE ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE SADAT

PEACE INITIATIVE.

BREWSTER

SECRET

NNN

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